

7 August 1981
MLD-1032

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

FROM: Chief, London Bureau

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- London Bureau -- July 1981

I. GENERAL

A.

[Redacted]

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B.

[Redacted]

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C. Our efforts to upgrade the teletype circuit [redacted] are still encountering difficulties at the British end of the line. The latest date we have been given by the GPO is mid-August.

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D. The Embassy has been advised that the State Department's contract team of position classifiers will be at the post for a period of ten weeks beginning 14 September. It is now reviewing the FSN position descriptions we have submitted, in preparation for the team's visit.

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E. The annual BBC-FBIS test match took place on the Caversham pitch directly after "The Wedding." The bureau triumphed 68 to 67 without our heaviest (avoirdupois) hitters getting to bat. Sterling play by [] spearheaded the attack, slowed only slightly by some confusion in [] mind whether one carried the bat between wickets or left it behind, American style. Work is now underway to repair broken wickets.

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II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. The long-awaited Polish party congress was the highlight of the month, but two preliminaries brought it all into sharpened focus. Early in the month, the BBC monitored over 15 hours of live coverage of a 2-day Sejm session. Some of this coverage came from a continuous feed of Warsaw II via a prebooked telephone line to Vienna that proved invaluable when a remote receiver malfunction limited use of the VCVC. Later, contingency staffing arrangements in the Listening Room, including an overnight shift, and a close watch on all Polish media permitted timely reporting of significant developments at a closed plenum of the Central Committee from Warsaw television and PAP Russian, uncommon sources of such information. In fact PAP Russian is becoming a more and more productive source. For example, it produced 17,000 words during a typical July week, as opposed to 700 during a comparable week in April.
2. The Ninth Extraordinary PZPR Congress was extraordinary in many respects, not least in the coverage challenges it presented. A second line to Vienna was again established, overnight monitorial shifts were laid on and maximum flexibility in editorial scheduling was required to handle Warsaw's ad hoc reportage of an unstructured event. All material was filed expeditiously without any backlogs. Appreciation for the efforts of all involved was expressed in a message from Chief, Operations Group.
3. Alerted by Headquarters to watch Paris Radio, the bureau scooped AP and REUTER by at least 20 minutes in reporting Bani-Sadr's flight from Iran; an advance FYI based on a Paris Domestic item moved within 5 minutes of broadcast. Although the Libyans cancelled their subscriptions to the DAILY REPORT, they seem determined to get their material in it: On the 25th, JANA telexed directly to the bureau a unique report on Al-Qadhdhafi's receipt

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of a letter from Iraq's Saddam Husayn. The item was filed to Washington only and, of course, not for publication. A good catch by editor [] alerted the bureau to a series of BBC World Service interviews with world notables on Reagan's foreign policy. Georgiy Arbatov's remarks were filed and transcripts of the other interviews were pouched to Headquarters.

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4. Caversham assists during the month included coverage of Ankara International in English and ANATOLIA when a power outage and electrical repairs disrupted operations at Tel Aviv and backstop printing of MENA when reception deteriorated at Nicosia. SIDs knocked out VHF, shortwave and longwave voice and radioteletype transmissions at Crowsley on several occasions, but mediumwave casts remained relatively unaffected and nothing significant seemed to have been missed. PARS remained consistently unmonitorable throughout all of July, save on the 27th when it was printed from very poor reception.
5. After interviewing and testing several applicants, PMU placed a Polish translator on a 1-year contract effective 15 July. ☒ This was just in time for the Polish party congress. PMU has begun receiving subscription copies of several central and ☒ regional Polish papers as of the 1 July issues and filed 15 items from the Polish press.

B. Cologne Unit

1.

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2. Significant events during the month included Willy Brandt's visit to the USSR and French President Mitterrand's visit to the FRG. The Socialist International Presidium held a session in Bonn. Also highlighting events in July were reaction to the economic summit in Ottawa and continuing discussions on medium-range missiles and the NATO dual decision.
3. The Embassy Political Section expressed its appreciation for FBIS-filed material in connection with Brandt's Moscow visit. This material was useful in preparing Ambassador Burns for his meeting with Brandt.

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C. Communications

1. A serious line fault occurred on our Mode I line to the Croughton Switch on 1 July, caused by Thames flooding near Henley. The problem was aggravated by heavy traffic (Regatta Week) and the refusal of local police to permit the GPO to dig up the roadway. The GPO was talking about "rerouting" the circuit involving an outage of "several weeks." Finally on the 2nd, the line was replaced by the circuit that had been ordered for [] upgrade. During the outage traffic flowed reasonably well both ways using Phase II altroute procedure. On 6 July the GPO advised that the original circuit had been reinstated. STAT
2. A planned downtime of the Croughton Switch took place on 18 July during which a Phase II altroute was operated with Headquarters acting as our altroute.

D. Engineering

1. The conversion to eight Extel ASR's for the punching operation was completed at month's end.
2. The Extel keyboard code converting F/ROMS are being changed to punch a blank on the shift of the number 7 key. This permits operators to pinkie code without going off the keyboard.
3. All Extel units were fitted with a copy illumination kit and a Toshiba 24-hour clock IQ-100A.

III. ADMINISTRATION

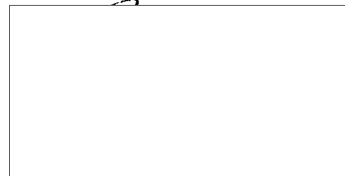
1. Teletype trainee operator [] was promoted to the second of two trainee grades, FSN6. STAT
2. Bureau staff engineer [] and wife departed on home leave 16 July; they will return in early September. STAT
3. FCS staffer [] arrived on 14 July to assume responsibility for ROSET cruising during [] home leave. STAT
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4. PMU Arabic monitor [] departed on 17 July for an extended TDY at Nicosia Bureau. STAT
5. Our new administrative officer, [] arrived at post on 15 July. STAT
The outgoing administrative officer, [] departed 30 July. STAT

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IV. VISITS

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Attachments

cc: Chief, Austrian Bureau
Chief, Cologne Unit